The prescription cascade: How America's mental health system keeps patients on more drugs, not fewer

05/26/2026 // Cassie B. // **310** Views

Tags: Antidepressants, badhealth, badmedicine, Big Pharma, Dangerous Medicine, deception, insanity, medical extremism, mental health, Mind, outrage, overprescription, pharmaceutical fraud, Prescription drugs, psychiatric drugs, truth

- A teen prescribed 14 psychiatric drugs by age 18 describes a prescription cascade that worsened her condition.
- Federal officials are now launching a plan to curb overprescribing, especially in children.
- Medicaid data shows children on ADHD drugs are far more likely to be prescribed additional psychiatric medications.
- Critics argue pills cannot teach emotional regulation or replace behavioral therapy.
- Former patients report no medical road map for safely discontinuing psychiatric medications.

The psychiatric medication machine is churning faster than ever, and a growing chorus of voices from former patients to federal health officials is asking whether the cure has become the disease.

At 14, Laura Delano sat in a psychiatrist's office and heard words that would shape the next decade and a half of her life. After a single appointment, the doctor told her she had bipolar disorder and would need medication forever. What followed was a "prescription cascade" —

two drugs became three, then four, then five, including Prozac, Depakote, lithium, Abilify and Effexor. Her condition only worsened.

"The more medications I took and the more diagnoses I accumulated, the more my life fell apart," Delano recently told "The Secretary Kennedy Podcast."

Delano's story is a window into a system that now has 6.1 million American children under 17 taking at least one psychiatric drug, according to a December 2025 report. The same system, critics argue, too often substitutes pills for genuine care, leaving patients sicker and more dependent than when they started.

"No road map" for getting off the drugs

Delano said she never questioned her treatment until 2010, when involuntary psychiatric interventions shattered her "unquestioning faith" in the system. Around the same time, she read Robert Whitaker's *Anatomy of an Epidemic*, which questioned whether long-term psychiatric drug use may worsen outcomes.

The realization was life-changing. "What if it's not treatment-resistant mental illness? What if it's the treatment?" she recalled thinking.

But discontinuing the medications proved nearly impossible. "I had no road map. My doctors didn't support it. They had no idea how to do it," Delano said. She described patients using water mixtures and syringes to make tiny dose reductions, calling it "the wild, wild west out there."

She later founded the Inner Compass Initiative to offer peer support for those questioning psychiatric medications.

Federal intervention targets overprescribing

The issue has reached the highest levels of government. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. launched a new action plan this month to curb psychiatric overprescribing, particularly among children.

"Today, we take clear and decisive action to confront our nation's mental health crisis by addressing the overuse of psychiatric medications," Kennedy said at a summit on mental health and overmedicalization. "We will support patient autonomy, require informed consent and shared decision-making and shift the standard of care toward prevention, transparency and a more holistic approach to mental health."

The plan includes evaluating prescription patterns, elevating nonmedication treatments and bridging research gaps.

Children face a cascade of drugs

A *Wall Street Journal* investigation into ADHD prescribing revealed a national phenomenon racing ahead of science and ethics, experts say. Medicaid data show that children who start on ADHD medication are far more likely to be on additional psychiatric drugs within four years. Most had never received behavioral therapy, despite American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines recommending behavioral approaches first for young children.

Psychologist Sam Goldstein, writing in *Psychology Today*, warned of this pattern for decades. "Pills do not teach skills," he wrote. "Medication cannot teach emotional regulation, self-control, frustration tolerance, or social competence."

Goldstein noted that more than 30 years ago, he and a colleague examined prescribing patterns and warned that some children were placed on multiple medications without sufficient evidence of safety. Those concerns have now fully materialized.

A nation's turn to pills

Danielle Gansky was 7 when a school suggested psychiatric evaluation for distraction and sloppy work. She ended up on 14 different psychiatric medications. "By her late 20s, she was fighting to taper off an antidepressant and still trying to understand the long-term consequences of medications she had been too young to question," according to the *Wall Street Journal* report.

The pattern reflects broader trends. Between 2006 and 2016, prescription stimulant use in the U.S. more than doubled. From 2020 to 2021, stimulant prescriptions rose more than 10% among women ages 15 to 44 and men ages 25 to 44, according to the CDC.

In many communities, behavioral therapy wait lists stretch months or years. Parents choose medication "not because it is the best answer but because it is the only available one," Goldstein wrote.

Recovery beyond the pill bottle

Delano's recovery involved more than stopping medications. She linked mental health to nutrition, sleep, sunlight and environmental factors. "The parts of your body that are altered by these medications" require support during withdrawal, she said.

Now off psychiatric drugs for nearly 16 years, Delano said she no longer sees emotional pain as evidence of a broken brain. "The objective to living isn't happiness. It's not the absence of pain," she said. "It's connection. It's meaning. It's purpose."

Her message hits at the heart of a debate that will only intensify. As millions of patients and families grapple with the consequences of a system built on quick fixes, the question is no longer whether psychiatric medications can help, but whether the cost of that help has grown too high to ignore.

Sources for this article include:

ChildrensHealthDefense.org

PMC.NCBI.NLM.NIH.gov

USNews.com

PsychologyToday.com

ASK BRIGHTANSWERS.AI

Ask our BrightAnswers.ai engine anything about this article or its topics Submit

Powered by BrightAnswers.ai Check out our prompting guide and video tutorials today.

RELATED TOPICS

ANTIDEPRESSANTS | BADHEALTH | BADMEDICINE | BIG PHARMA | DANGEROUS MEDICINE | DECEPTION | INSANITY | MEDICAL EXTREMISM | MENTAL HEALTH | MIND | OUTRAGE | OVERPRESCRIPTION | PHARMACEUTICAL FRAUD | PRESCRIPTION DRUGS | PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS | TRUTH

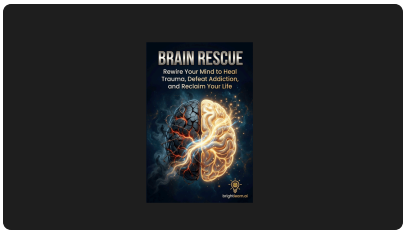
LATEST NEWS

05/26/2026 / By Cassie B.

“No dust, no dollars”: White House draws hard line in Iran nuclear talks

05/26/2026 / By Cassie B.

The prescription cascade: How America’s mental health system keeps patients on more drugs, not fewer



05/26/2026 / By Belle Carter

Brain Rescue: The underground manual for healing your fractured mind in a toxic world

05/26/2026 / By Ava Grace

Trump deploys 5,000 troops to Poland, reversing Pentagon cancellation

05/26/2026 / By Morgan S. Verity

Russia-China Summit Advances Multipolar Vision, Analysts Say

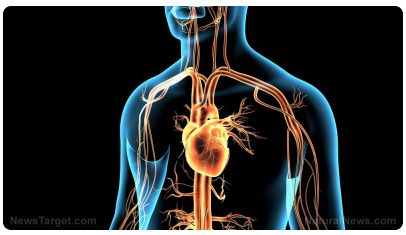
05/26/2026 / By Garrison Vance

Mossad Insider Details Beeper Operation Against Hezbollah in New Book

RELATED NEWS

05/26/2026 / By Patrick Lewis

The shocking truth about hypertension: Why SUGAR—not just salt—may be driving up your blood pressure



05/26/2026 / By Lance D Johnson

These preservatives are now linked to high blood pressure and heart disease risk

05/26/2026 / By Coco Somers

The Ultra-Processed Food Genocide: How Globalist Corporations Are Poisoning Humanity for Profit and Depopulation

05/26/2026 / By Mike Adams

The Nocebo Effect: The Real Psyop Behind Fake Pandemics

05/26/2026 / By Belle Carter

The Chemical Veil: How the psychiatric industrial complex manufactured a mental health epidemic

05/26/2026 / By Patrick Lewis

Colorado Supreme Court orders children's hospital to resume gender-related procedures for minors

0 COMMENTS

Please sign in with your Brighteon account to leave comments

Not a user, Create your FREE account today.

Learn more about our new comment system.

Sign In Sign Up

TAKE ACTION:

Support Natural News by linking to this article from your website.

Permalink to this article:

https://www.naturalnews.com/2026-05-26-america-mental-health-system-patients-more-drugs.html Copy

Embed article link:

<a href="https://www.naturalnews.com/2026-05-26-america-mental-health-system-patients-more-drugs.html">The

Copy

Reprinting this article:

Non-commercial use is permitted with credit to NaturalNews.com (including a clickable link).
Please contact us for more information.

FREE EMAIL ALERTS

Get independent news alerts on natural cures, food lab tests, cannabis medicine, science, robotics, drones, privacy and more.

Enter Your Email Address

We respect your privacy

Download on the App Store

Install for Android

AI Powered by Brighteon.AI

This site is part of the Natural News Network © 2022 All Rights Reserved. Privacy | Terms All content posted on this site is commentary or opinion and is protected under Free Speech. Truth Publishing International, LTD. is not responsible for content written by contributing authors. The information on this site is provided for educational and entertainment purposes only. It is not intended as a substitute for professional advice of any kind. Truth Publishing assumes no responsibility for the use or misuse of this material. Your use of this website indicates your agreement to these terms and those published here. All trademarks, registered trademarks and servicemarks mentioned on this site are the property of their respective owners.